

What is claimed is:

1. A conveyor having an entrance and an exit, said conveyor configured to convey articles along a conveying surface in a downstream direction, said conveyor comprising:
 - a. a pair of spaced apart conveyor side frames extending in a longitudinal direction, said longitudinal direction being generally parallel to said downstream direction, said pair having a first end and a second end, said first end being disposed adjacent said entrance, said second end being disposed adjacent said exit, said first end being configured to be disposed higher than said second end;
 - b. a first plurality of spaced apart conveyor rollers defining at least a first part of said conveying surface, each of said conveyor rollers having an axis of rotation and two spaced apart ends, each of said spaced apart ends being supported by a respective one of said conveyor side frames, said conveyor roller being disposed transverse to said downstream direction;
 - c. a drive member carried by said conveyor disposed below said conveying surface, said drive member having a drive axis of rotation generally extending in said longitudinal direction;
 - d. a motor operatively connected to said drive member so as to rotate said drive member about said drive axis of rotation; and
 - e. at least one drive element connecting said drive member in driving relationship to a plurality of said first plurality of conveyor rollers so as to rotate said plurality of said first plurality of conveyor rollers to advance articles disposed on said at least a first part of said conveying surface in said downstream direction.
2. The conveyor of claim 1, comprising a control configured to run said motor.
3. The conveyor of claim 1, comprising a sensor disposed to sense presence of an article on said conveyor.

4. The conveyor of claim 3, wherein said first sensor is configured to sense the presence of an article within an area above said conveying surface, said area having a width extending transverse to said longitudinal direction and a length extending in said longitudinal direction.

5. The conveyor of claim 1, comprising a sensor disposed to sense presence of an article at a predetermined location downstream of said exit, said article having been discharged from said exit of said conveyor.

6. The conveyor of claim 1, comprising;

- a. a control configured to run said motor;
- b. a first sensor disposed to sense presence of an article on said conveyor;
- c. a second sensor disposed to sense presence of an article at a predetermined location downstream of said exit, said article having been discharged from said exit of said conveyor; and
- d. said first and second sensors being connected to said control.

7. The conveyor of claim 6, wherein a plurality of said first plurality of conveyor rollers is skewed with respect to said downstream direction.

8. The conveyor of claim 1, comprising a second plurality of spaced apart conveying rollers defining a second part of said conveying surface, each of said conveyor rollers having an axis of rotation and two spaced apart ends, each of said spaced apart ends being supported by a respective one of said conveyor side frames, said conveyor roller being disposed transverse to said longitudinal direction, said second plurality being disposed downstream of said first plurality, each of said second plurality of said conveying rollers being configured to rotate freely.

9. The conveyor of claim 8, wherein at least one of said pair of spaced apart conveyor side frames comprises a plurality of sections secured together.
10. The conveyor of claim 8, wherein a plurality of said first plurality of conveyor rollers is skewed with respect to said downstream direction.
11. The conveyor of claim 1, wherein said drive member comprises a tube.
12. The conveyor of claim 11, wherein said motor is disposed within said tube.
13. The conveyor of claim 1, wherein a plurality of said first plurality of conveyor rollers is skewed with respect to said downstream direction.
14. A conveyor system configured to convey articles in a downstream direction along a conveying surface, said conveyor comprising:
 - a. a plurality of declined gravity conveyor sections; and
 - b. a plurality of controlled conveyor sections interposed between said gravity conveyor sections, each said controlled conveyor sections comprising:
 - i. a pair of spaced apart conveyor side frames extending in a longitudinal direction, said longitudinal direction being generally parallel to said downstream direction, said pair having a first end and a second end;
 - ii. a first plurality of spaced apart conveyor rollers defining at least a first part of said conveying surface, each of said conveyor rollers having an axis of rotation and two spaced apart ends, each of said spaced apart ends being supported by a respective one of said conveyor side frames, said conveyor roller being disposed transverse to said downstream direction;

- iii. a drive member carried by said conveyor disposed below said conveying surface, said drive member having a drive axis of rotation generally extending in said longitudinal direction;
- iv. a motor operatively connected to said drive member so as to rotate said drive member about said drive axis of rotation; and
- v. at least one drive element connecting said drive member in driving relationship to a plurality of said first plurality of conveyor rollers so as to rotate said plurality of said first plurality of conveyor rollers to advance articles disposed on said at least a first part of said conveying surface in said downstream direction.

15. The conveying system of claim 14, wherein each controlled conveyor sections comprises:

- a. a control configured to run said motor;
- b. a first sensor disposed to sense presence of an article on said controlled conveyor section;
- c. a second sensor disposed to sense presence of an article at a predetermined location on that gravity conveyor located downstream of said controlled conveyor section, said article having been discharged from said controlled conveyor section; and
- d. said first and second sensors being connected to said control.

16. The conveying system of claim 15, wherein a plurality of said first plurality of conveyor rollers is skewed with respect to said downstream direction.

17. The conveyor of claim 14, wherein said drive member comprises a tube.

18. The conveyor of claim 17, wherein said motor is disposed within said tube.